



My name is Sophie. I am a student at the University of Warwick studying Hispanic Studies and French. English is my native language, but I also speak French and Spanish. Over the last year I have spent time living in France and Spain, and it was my stay in Spain

which inspired this text. I found it quite tricky to settle when I got to Spain, but when I found this little café tucked down a side street, I was welcomed in with open arms (quite literally!) and I really started to find my feet in the new city!

14. Walking Off the Beaten Track (KS2-5)

Sophie Hurst

Living in a big city can feel a bit like living in a jungle. Each part of the city is full of life. But each and every citizen has their own life and does exactly what they need to survive in this ever-changing environment. Between the species of this jungle, there aren't any explicit interactions. There are groups who know each other, but in reality, the sense of a community can be difficult to find. So, trying to find your feet in this environment can be tricky.

When I arrived in my new city, walking through the streets felt like walking through a maze. Each shop was bursting with noises, smells which excited the senses and there were people everywhere. But trying to start a conversation seemed an impossible task. This was until I started walking down the side streets. The noises stopped and the people disappeared. But the shops oozed personality and at the end of the smallest side

street I found, there was a café. And it was there, in that moment, that I found the heart of the city.

Upon opening the doors, I was surrounded by friendly faces and I could take part in conversations, which I had only ever overheard before. To meet people, you only have to take a walk on the unbeaten path. I learnt that everyone has their place, even in such a bustling city. It's just a question of keeping on walking until you find it!

QUESTIONS:

KS2 & 3

- 1) Is this person living in a small or big city?
- 2) True or false, the sense of community is easy to find.
- 3) Where did the protagonist find the café?
- 4) True or False, the protagonist could have conversations in the café?
- 5) What did the protagonist learn you have to do to find your place in a new city?

KS4 & 5

- 1) What emotions do you think the protagonist was feeling when she was walking around the streets, before finding the café? Was she comfortable and happy?

- 2) Is it normal to feel like you don't belong when you first arrive in a new place? Can you think of a time when you might have felt like this in your life?
- 3) Having a sense of community can be very important when you are in a new place. When the protagonist found the café, how do you imagine she felt? Do you think it helped her or not?
- 4) Can you think of a time a stranger has been kind to you, or you have been welcomed in by a group, how did it make you feel?
- 5) What sort of conversations do you imagine the protagonist had in the café? Can you come up with an example?